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**Subject:** [External] FERC to review gas pipeline permitting policy

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By Darius Dixon

12/21/2017 01:46 PM EDT

FERC Chairman Kevin McIntyre announced today that regulators plan to conduct an open-ended review of a policy statement that has guided the agency's natural gas pipeline review process for nearly two decades.

McIntyre said it's essential for organizations to occasionally review their policies as a matter of good governance, and he would approach the review with an open mind.

"A new fresh look at our policies should not be read as a complaint about our current policy. It is not. I do not have any specific area of our current policy practice that I am proposing be changed. I'm open to change, of course," he told reporters.

The [1999 statement](#) has served the FERC well, Commissioner Cheryl LaFleur said, but she argued that the agency has taken a narrow view of the policy in practice.

"Over time our practice has coalesced around a reliance on precedent agreements as the determiner of market need ... I think our review of pipeline applications would benefit from a broader consideration of need," LaFleur said.

In October, she [explained](#) her position in a dissent to FERC's approval of the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley projects, which then-Chairman Neil Chatterjee "strongly" [disagreed](#) with.

Similarly, former FERC Chairman Norman Bay attached a [separate statement](#) to a natural gas pipeline approval before he resigned in February where he suggested that the agency's view of pipeline "need" was too narrowly defined by gas shipping agreements.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** McIntyre indicated that reviewing the pipeline policy statement would be top tier issue for FERC in 2018 but said that it was too early to say what form the review process will take. A range of options are available, he said, including a notice of inquiry or technical conferences.

*To view online:*

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